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Film and Videos

- Inclusive Faith*. Video. 19 minutes. Lutherans Concerned/North America.
- Lutherans Reflect on Human Sexuality*. Video. ELCA Division for Church in Society, 1993.
- "*May We Talk ?*" *A reflection on human sexuality by the Bishop of the Church*. Video. ELCA Department of Communication, 1994.
- Out of the Past: The Struggle for Gay and Lesbian Rights in America*. Film. PBS documentary. A-Pix Entertainment, 1997.
- School's Out: Confronting Homophobia in High-School*. Film. National Film Board of Canada.
- Stories of Gay People and Family Members: Talking Together as Christians about Homosexuality*. Video. 88 minutes. ELCA Division for Church in Society.
- This is My Story*. Video. 22 minutes. Lutherans Concerned/North America.
- Two Ethical Perspectives: Talking Together as Christians about Homosexuality*. Video. 90 minutes. ELCA Division for Church in Society, 1999.

Web sites

Affirmation (Mormon) <www.teleport.com/~affadmin>
American Baptists Concerned <www.rainbowbaptist.org>
Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (BMC) <www.webcom.com/bmc/welcome.html>
Bridges Across the Divide <www.bridges-across.org>
Coming Out Stories <www.comingoutstories.com>
Dignity USA (Roman Catholic) <www.dignityusa.org>
Eagles' Wings Ministry <www.ewm.org>
Exodus International North America <www.exodusnorthamerica.org>
Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ELCA) <www.extraordinarycandidacyproject.org>
GayCanada <www.gaycanada.com>
GayChristians <www.gaychristians.org>
Gay Lesbian and Straight Education Network <www.glsen.org>
God's Love is Our Witness (GLOW) <www.glow.cc>
Integrity Canada (Anglican) <www.kapn.tap.net/integrity/>
Lutherans Concerned/North America <www.lcna.org>
Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries <www.llgm.org>
More Light Presbyterian (USA) <www.mlp.org>
National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality <www.narth.com>
New Commandment Task Force (Episcopal Church-USA) <members.aol.com/newcmdment/>
Ontario Consultation on Religious Tolerance <www.religioustolerance.org>
Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) <www.pflag.org>
Planet Out <www.planetout.com>
Reconciling in Christ Program <www.lcna.org/ric.html>
Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist) <www.rcp.org>
Soulforce (Interfaith) <www.soulforce.org>
Transforming Congregations (United Methodist) <www.transformingcong.org>
Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (UFMCC) <www.ufmcc.com>
Whosoever (GLBT online magazine) <www.whosoever.org>
Wingspan Ministry <www.stpaulref.org/wingspan.htm>

[While every effort was made to ensure that the addresses for these Web sites are accurate, readers may discover some changes since publication because of the nature of the Internet. They were last confirmed on January 4, 2001]

Appendix One

Guide for Caring Conversations

Origins of the Caring Conversation Model

In March, 1999, the National Church Council passed a motion stating that the ELCIC would strive to create an environment which would enable the church to develop policies and ministries that will lead to a more inclusive and welcoming place for gay and lesbian people. At the 1999 National Convention in Regina a model for Caring Conversations was piloted. The convention took action to affirm that Caring Conversations be recommended to all ELCIC synods, conferences and congregations. Since that time, numerous Caring Conversations have occurred throughout the ELCIC.

What Is a Caring Conversation?

A caring conversation is an opportunity for members of the ELCIC to listen to the experiences of gay and lesbian people and their families. The Christ-like qualities of respect, empathy and care are important components of the conversation. Divisive, argumentative and judging behaviour is inappropriate and unwelcome. In listening to one another, there is hope that the ELCIC and its congregations will begin to extend a genuine welcome to those sisters and brothers in Christ who are lesbian or gay.

Suggested Format for a Caring Conversation

After introductory remarks each guest is given 10–15 minutes to share their story. Depending on the number of guests, this portion will be approximately one hour in length. When all the stories have been heard, a question period of approximately 30 minutes gives listeners the opportunity to ask questions. These questions are of a clarification or elaborative nature. Finally a shorter time (15–20 minutes) is slotted for the important work of reflection on the conversation, usually in small groups.

- 1) Welcome.
- 2) Devotions: suggested text Philippians 1: 27–2:11.
- 3) Summary of the origin of the model.
- 4) Explain the format for the Caring Conversation (an agenda/outline on a flipchart may be helpful).

- 5) Review the ground rules.
- 6) Introduction of and presentation by the panel of guest speakers (approx. 15 min.).
- 7) Questions from the listeners for clarification (approx. 30 min.).
- 8) Small group reflection (15–20 min.).
- 9) Wind up, thanks.

Ground Rules

- 1) The focus/intention of the conversation is the stories. Our work is to listen carefully, sensitively and empathetically, maintaining a Christ-like attitude.
- 2) Debate, criticism, analysis, advice-giving will not be permitted. The role of the facilitator is to ensure that a caring atmosphere is maintained. The facilitator may interrupt, ask for clarification on the part of the questioner, or call a brief time out if necessary. The purpose of the question period is clarification of what has been shared.
- 3) The facilitator will serve as moderator of the conversation, ensuring that everyone who wishes to speak has an opportunity. The facilitator will encourage the listeners to phrase their questions in a simple and straightforward manner.
- 4) If at any point in the conversation the guest panelists feel uncomfortable, they will indicate same to the facilitator. This may arise unintentionally. Regardless, the guest panelists may decline to respond to any question that they are not prepared to answer.
- 5) No interruptions.

Small Group Reflection

Groups of 3–4 people meet to discuss what they have learned in this experience. Use these questions to facilitate the discussion:

What new insights have you from this conversation?

What have you learned?

What was valuable?

Pre-Conversation Checklist

In preparation for a Caring Conversation the following steps are recommended:

- 1) Identify a sponsoring congregation.
- 2) Identify a facilitator with an understanding of the issue and an ability to respond in this setting with sensitivity, caring and objectivity.
- 3) Identify a target population.
- 4) Develop publicity to describe the goals of the Caring Conversation.
 - to listen to the stories of those living with issues of homosexuality
 - to attend prayerfully with a desire to discern the will of God for themselves and their congregation
- 5) Set out the ground rules for the event.
- 6) Identify possible outcomes.
- 7) Identify guest speakers who will serve on the panel.

The facilitator will recruit guest speakers to serve as panelists. Presenters can be identified through the facilitator's own personal network or by contacting the National Office of the ELCIC or Lutherans Concerned-Canada.

It is important that the facilitator meet with the guest panelists prior to the Caring Conversation to establish rapport and build trust. It is also useful for the panelists to meet each other and clarify names and agree on an order for presentation of the stories.

Wind Up

This is a time to say thank you to those who have shared their stories and also to those who have listened. As a church striving to be a more inclusive and welcoming place for gay and lesbian people, all in attendance need to be commended for their participation.

Debriefing

The facilitator is encourage to meet with the panelists immediately following the conversation to debrief participants about the experience.

Glossary

Bisexual Having a bisexual orientation. A man or woman having emotional and physical feelings of affection and attraction to both men and women.

Celibate, celibacy Living in a state of singleness. Refraining from sexual relations.

Chaste, chastity Living a life of moral and/or religious purity in thought and deed.

Closet (to be in the) Being secret about one's sexual orientation.

Coming out Accepting one's sexual orientation and telling others. See also: **out/outing**.

Crossdresser One who desires to wear the clothing of the other gender. The term does not refer to sexual orientation.

Dyke Offensive term referring to a strong woman.

Faggot Offensive term referring to homosexuals.

Gay A person who has a homosexual orientation. A man who has emotional and physical feelings of affection and attraction for other men. In the case of women, the preferred term is lesbian. The term "gay" is also used as an inclusive term to describe anyone who is not heterosexual.

Gender Male and female. The term does not refer to sexual behaviour.

Gender identity A person's basic conviction of being male or female.

Gender role Social expectations associated with being female or male.

GID (gender identity disorder) The condition of feeling out of place in one's gender of birth.

GLBT Acronym for the inclusive catch-phrase "gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered."

Healing, Therapy The use of various treatments (including drugs, electric shock, psychological conditioning, aversion therapy, etc.) to bring about a change in sexual orientation. See also: **Reparative therapy**

Heterosexism Discrimination against homosexuals. The assumption that all people are heterosexual.

Heterosexual, Heretosexuality (medical term) Someone attracted primarily to persons of the opposite sex. Having emotional and physical feelings of affection and attraction to people of the opposite gender. See also: **straight**

Homophobia Irrational fear and intolerance of homosexuality and gays. Also used to mean any discomfort with homosexuality.

Homosexual, Homosexuality Having emotional and physical feelings of affection and attraction for people of the same gender. Term coined by Hungarian doctor Carl Maria Benkert, 1869. See also **Queer**.

Lesbian A woman having a same-sex orientation. A woman who has emotional and physical feelings of affection and attraction to women.

Out/Outing Revealing to others the secret of one's sexual orientation. A verb, used in such phrases as "Don't out me!"

Queer A friendly umbrella term, embracing many kinds of sexual and other minorities. A term more inclusive than GLBT. Queer Theology is beginning to take its place beside Liberation Theology and Feminist Theology.

Reparative therapy Any type of counselling which aims to help men and women move away from unwanted homosexuality or lesbianism. The expression is offensive to gays. They have come to accept their identity as wholesome and healthy and do not see any need for repairing or healing it.

Sexual behaviour What persons do as an expression of their sexual orientation, but not always in keeping with it. A person can determine to manifest behaviour that is not an expression of his/her orientation.

Sexuality Erotic feelings, attitudes, values, attraction, arousal, and/or physical contact.

Sexual orientation The deep-seated physical, emotional, and affectional direction of one's sexual response toward partners of the same sex (**homosexual**), other sex (**heterosexual**), or both sexes (**bisexual**).

Sexual orientation identity A person's self-identification as heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, etc.

Straight A person of heterosexual orientation.

Transgendered People who manifest characteristics commonly associated with persons of the other gender. An umbrella term, referring to the whole range of ways in which people express their sexual identity by transgressing traditional gender norms. Transgendered persons may be homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual in orientation. Some distinct types of transgendered persons are crossdresser, bi-gendered, persons born with ambiguous genitalia, persons choosing surgical change of gender, transsexual, transvestite, male/female impersonator, etc.

Transsexual Men and women who consider themselves to be members of the opposite gender and desire to rid themselves of their primary and sexual characteristics and live as members of the other sex.

Transition A transsexual's move from one gender to another after sexual reconstruction surgery and hormonal therapy.

Transvestite A person who dresses in clothing of the opposite sex. Usually a heterosexual man dressing in women's clothing. More commonly **Crossdresser**.

